

This Page Is Inserted by IFW Operations  
and is not a part of the Official Record

## **BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES**

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images may include (but are not limited to):

- BLACK BORDERS
- TEXT CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES
- FADED TEXT
- ILLEGIBLE TEXT
- SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES
- COLORED PHOTOS
- BLACK OR VERY BLACK AND WHITE DARK PHOTOS
- GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS

**IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.**

**As rescanning documents *will not* correct images,  
please do not report the images to the  
Image Problem Mailbox.**





(22) Date de dépôt/Filing Date: 2003/01/16

(41) Mise à la disp. pub./Open to Public Insp.: 2003/07/17

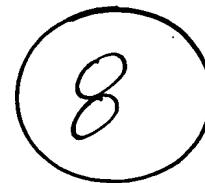
(30) Priorité/Priority: 2002/01/17 (102 01 503.1) DE

(51) Cl.Int.<sup>7</sup>/Int.Cl.<sup>7</sup> F27B 7/24, F27B 7/20

(71) Demandeur/Applicant:  
VEBA OEL TECHNOLOGIE UND AUTOMATISIERUNG  
GMBH, DE

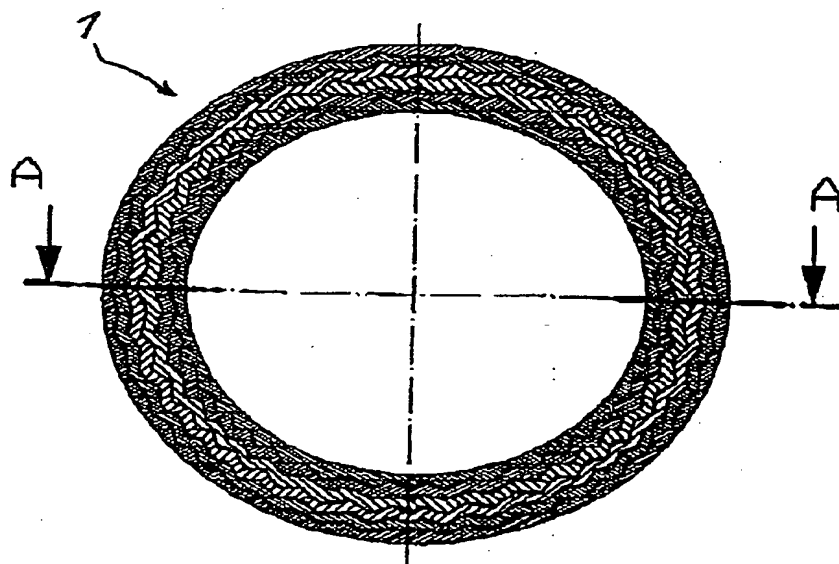
(72) Inventeurs/Inventors:  
RAICHLE, PETER H., DE;  
WERNER, HARRY F., DE

(74) Agent: FETHERSTONHAUGH & CO.



(54) Titre : FOUR ROTATIF A JOINT D'EXTREMITÉ ANNULAIRE FERME, JOINT ANNULAIRE FERME POUR FOUR  
ROTATIF ET METHODE DE PRODUCTION

(54) Title: ROTARY KILN WITH ANNULAR, CLOSED END SEAL, ANNULAR, CLOSED SEAL FOR A ROTARY KILN,  
AND METHOD FOR THE PRODUCTION OF SUCH A SEAL



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

The invention is based on the problem of designing an endless sealing ring for the end wall seal of rotary kilns so that it guarantees a high degree of sealing effectiveness with simpler assembly. The most desired features are small tolerances for cross section and diameter. Rotary-kiln end-wall seals according to the invention should exhibit very low wear and tear if possible and have a service life that corresponds to the maintenance intervals of the rotary kiln as much as possible. This problem is solved for an annular, closed seal for the end seal of a rotary kiln between the rotating tube and the stationary end walls, wherein a core ring has a polygonal, preferably rectangular, cross section with a joint protected from tensile loads and the core ring is surrounded by an endless braid to form the desired final cross section, such that the joint of the core ring is fixed and protected from tension, preferably by tension-relieving threads or fibers extending in the ring circumferential direction and anchored on both sides of the joint.



### ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention is based on the problem of designing an endless sealing ring for the end wall seal of rotary kilns so that it guarantees a high degree of sealing effectiveness with simpler assembly. The most desired features are small tolerances for cross section and diameter. Rotary-kiln end-wall seals according to the invention should exhibit very low wear and tear if possible and have a service life that corresponds to the maintenance intervals of the rotary kiln as much as possible. This problem is solved for an annular, closed seal for the end seal of a rotary kiln between the rotating tube and the stationary end walls, wherein a core ring has a polygonal, preferably rectangular, cross section with a joint protected from tensile loads and the core ring is surrounded by an endless braid to form the desired final cross section, such that the joint of the core ring is fixed and protected from tension, preferably by tension-relieving threads or fibers extending in the ring circumferential direction and anchored on both sides of the joint.

# **ROTARY KILN WITH ANNULAR, CLOSED END SEAL, ANNULAR, CLOSED SEAL FOR A ROTARY KILN, AND METHOD FOR THE PRODUCTION OF SUCH A SEAL**

The invention concerns a rotary kiln with an annular, closed end seal, an annular, closed seal for a rotary kiln, as well as a method for the production of such a seal - according to the preambles of Claims 1, 14, and 16.

## **BACKGROUND ON THE INVENTION**

Due to gases that are produced by rotary kilns during many chemical processes and that should not be allowed to mix with the surrounding atmosphere, it is necessary to seal the gap between the rotating, heated kiln tube and the stationary ends containing the inlet or the outlet for the material to be treated in the rotary kiln with sealing rings. This necessity and the problems that have appeared from their practical implementation have already been described in DE 40 35 129 A1 with reference to the changing sealing gap dimensions at the periphery of the seal. This problem was solved with self-centering sealing surfaces, which engage each other with a positive fit and are thus profiled for this purpose.

Because self-centering seals must withstand considerable shear forces, their sealing behavior is less satisfactory in comparison with elastic sealing rings.

The use of comparable elastic seals requires a multi-sided support for the ring seal in a sealing groove, which has a polygonal, usually rectangular, cross section. The insertion of sealing rings in such grooves for holding sealing rings is only relatively problem-free if the sealing rings have very accurate dimensions. Until now, the problem of dimensional accuracy for such sealing rings has only been solved extremely unsatisfactorily, so that instead of annular, closed seals, prefabricated endless sealing cords have been used which are cut to length corresponding to the desired seal circumference. These sealing rings, which do not belong to the present class, have the disadvantage, among other things, that their sealing behavior at the joint is usually unsatisfactory. In addition, problems due to increased wear and tear occur at the joint.

Previous attempts at using sealing rings with polygonal, closed cross sections consisting of a core ring with a joint as well as a cover made from an endless braid have always failed in practice because the closed sealing rings too often deviate in cross section and/or in circumference from the desired dimensions. The associated waste was excessively high.

Endless sealing cords were successful to a certain degree in improving the mechanical strength and especially the shape-retention capability of braided sealing cords. For this purpose, the braid fibers in the polygon corners were made out of a different material than the braid fibers

in the middle of the polygon surfaces. For example, elongated PTFE filaments impregnated with graphite were used as braid fibers in the regions of the centers of the polygon surface and aramid filaments were used in the region of the polygon corners.

For larger sealing cross sections, especially seals that consist of a core material and a braid, and especially for closed sealing rings, this braid technique, as described, e.g., in EP 0 741 807 B1, leads only under certain circumstances to the desired result, and at best up to a maximum operating temperature of 300°C.

Starting from these conditions, one object of the invention is forming an endless sealing ring for end-wall seals of rotary kilns for all operating temperatures, but especially for temperatures >400°C, such that for simpler assembly, a high degree of sealing effectiveness is guaranteed. Especially desired are small tolerances for cross section and diameter. According to the invention, rotary kiln end-wall seals should exhibit especially low wear and tear if possible and should have a service life that corresponds as much as possible to the maintenance intervals of the rotary kiln.

## **SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION**

To solve this problem, a rotary kiln with the features of Claim 1, a sealing ring with the features of Claim 14, and also a production method with the features of Claim 16 are proposed. According to the invention, there is a core ring with a joint protected from tensile loads and the core ring is surrounded by an endless braid to form the desired final cross section. The dimensional accuracy and service life behavior is, further, significantly improved in that the endless braid has elongated shape-retention threads or fibers in the region of the polygon corners parallel to the circumferential direction of the ring. This latter feature is also assumed to have stand-alone inventive quality, independent of the joint formation.

Sealing rings according to the invention exhibit long service lives and better shape retention than could be previously realized.

It is now possible, in different ways, further to improve sealing rings according to the invention for rotary kilns relative to their core ring and joint formation and also relative to the endless cover.

The components that are used according to the invention and that are described above, in the claims, and in the embodiments, feature no special conditions in size, shape, material selection, and technical design, so that selection criteria known in the field of application can be used without restrictions.

Additional details, features, and advantages of the object of the invention result from the subclaims and also from the following description of the relevant drawing, which illustrates, as an example, a preferred embodiment of the rotary kiln according to the invention with an annular, closed end seal, an annular, closed seal for a rotary kiln, and also a method for producing such a seal. Shown in the drawing are:

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

- Figure 1, a closed sealing ring according to the invention in top view;
- Figure 2, the same sealing ring in an axial section (section along line A-A from Figure 1);
- Figure 3, just the core ring of the same sealing ring in axial section representation (from section A-A in Figure 1);
- Figure 4A, a braided core ring cord in top view;
- Figure 4B, the same core ring cord in cross section;
- Figures 5A-5C, the joint of the core ring from Figure 3 in three different production stages;
- Figure 6A, a short circumferential section of a closed sealing ring in side view;
- Figure 6B, the same closed sealing ring in cross section, schematized, and also
- Figure 6C, the same closed sealing ring in cross section, partially schematized, and
- Figure 7a/b, a cutout from an end of a rotary kiln with installed closed sealing ring in end view (Figure 7a) and axial section view (Figure 7b).

### **PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION**

The sealing ring illustrated in top view in Figure 1, from which an outside view of the outer endless braid layer can be seen, consists of a core ring 2 with joint 3 and a cover of the core ring 2 formed as an endless braid 10, as can be seen in Figures 2 and 3.

As can be seen especially in Figures 4A and 4B, the material of the core ring, which is present first as an endless cord and which preferably already has a polygonal cross section, can be a known braid, which consists of longitudinal fibers 4A and diagonal braid fibers 4B. Illustrated in the drawing and particularly preferred is a so-called four-track braiding of the core ring material. However, because the invention does not concern the making of the core material, the core ring is schematized in the remaining drawings, i.e., it is not shown as a braid.

From Figures 5A-5C, six steps for protecting the joint 3 of the core ring 2 from tensile loads can be seen: the joint 3 runs at an angle, preferably below 45°, to the rotating tube axis A. In order to prevent fraying of the interfaces, these can be coated with an adhesive. For the use of

the seal in a rotary kiln, a high-temperature resistant adhesive, such as that marketed under the trade name of PATEX, can be used. Adhesive can also be used at the joint. For protecting the point of adhesion, this can be fixed, e.g., by winding a fiber-reinforced adhesive tape 14 around the joint (Figure 5A). Then both sides of the joint 3 are anchored by tension-relieving threads 5, 6. This is preferably done, as shown in Figure 5B, such that parallel seam threads arranged in the ring extension direction, i.e., in the direction of rotation, penetrate the core ring 2, especially at a right angle, on both sides of the joint 3. For the embodiment illustrated in Figure 5B, circular threading is provided between opposing core ring surfaces. The tension-relieving threads are arranged in a double layer. First, a layer of carbon fibers 5, particularly made of double-threaded carbon fiber filaments, is threaded in the way described above. The preferred tensile strength of the carbon fiber threads is between 800 and 1400 N/m<sup>2</sup>.

Then a second (outer) layer of tension-relieving threads 6 is threaded in the way described above. These preferably consist of aramid filaments, whose tensile strength is preferably between 2000 and 2900 N/m<sup>2</sup> per thread. In this way, tensile strength in the joint region of the core ring comparable to the core ring material is achieved so that a core ring of greater dimensional accuracy is produced. For a practical embodiment, core rings are produced in the four-track method with greater cross-sectional consistency of approximately 20 x 20 mm and a core-ring outer diameter of approximately 1.25 m, which has a tolerance better than or equal to 0.5% relative to the desired diameter.

In order to prevent thicker regions in the joint region, the tension-relieving threads 5, 6 are wound after the threading with the carbon fiber filaments (threading winding 7). Here, the tensile strength of the tension relief is also increased.

Usually, the threading of the tension-relieving threads is performed under high tension, wherein, e.g., 10 threads run horizontal and 10 threads run vertical through or along the core material. The second threading with aramid filaments is performed at conventional application temperatures, i.e., above 300°C for additional joint adhesion by means of melting the aramid filaments.

The closed core ring produced in this way is then braided in the endless method. In this way, the sealing cross section receives the desired final dimensions. Despite this braiding, for which the braid threads necessarily run diagonal to the sealing circumference, no bulges appear and the core ring retains its dimensional accuracy. The two braiding layers are designated 10a and 10b in Figures 6A-6C. Along the polygon corners, shape-retaining threads or fibers 8 are tensioned. These are encompassed/embraced - together with the core ring or with an already made braid 10a from the subsequent endless braiding. In this way, a tensile force is exerted on the shape-retaining threads, which is, preferably, higher than the tensile force acting on the braid threads. In Figures 6B and 6C, the layer and the cross section of the shape-retaining threads 8 are



illustrated only schematically for reasons of clarity. By means of the shape-retaining threads, the desired polygonal cross section is maintained for the endless braiding and the braiding is reinforced for tension. In this way, it was achieved that as a whole not only can the desired cross section resulting from the braiding be maintained with higher accuracy, but also the sealing ring diameter maintains the above-mentioned tolerance at better than or equal to 0.5%.

From Figure 7a/b, the rotating tube 16 of a known rotary kiln 20 can be seen. This tube contacts two closed sealing rings 1 according to the invention on the left rotating end surface. These rings have a coaxial and coplanar arrangement and are held in the circular grooves of a sealing carrier ring 15 with matching cross section on a stationary end wall 18 so that the sealing carrier ring does not rotate.

As a whole, a sealing ring for rotary kilns with greater dimensional accuracy and less wear and tear is produced by the invention.

For improvement of the dimensional accuracy, the sealing ring can be calendered between individual operating steps. The braid fibers are spliced at the end with the existing braid in order to keep the cross-sectional differences as small as possible.

#### List of reference symbols

- 1      Closed sealing ring
- 2      Core ring
- 3      Joint
- 4      Braid
- 4a     Longitudinal fibers
- 4b     Braid fibers
- 5      Tension-relieving threads
- 6      Tension-relieving threads
- 7      Threading winding
- 8      Shape-retaining threads
- 10     Endless braid
- 10a    First braid layer
- 10b    Second braid layer
- 14     Fixing tape
- 15     Sealing carrier ring
- 16     Rotating tube
- 18     End wall
- 20     Rotary kiln

We Claim:

1. Rotary kiln with at least one annular closed end seal between the revolving tube (16) and at least one stationary end wall (18), wherein one or more of said closed sealing rings consisting of a core ring (2) that has a polygonal, preferably rectangular, cross section having a joint (3) and further consisting of a cover formed as an endless braid (10) surrounding the core ring (2), the improvement comprising that said core ring is protected from tensile loads in the zone of said joint (3).

2. Rotary kiln according to Claim 1, wherein said joint (3) of the core ring (2) is protected from tension by tension-relieving threads or fibers (5,6) extending in the ring circumferential direction and anchored on both sides of the joint.

3. Rotary kiln according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein said joint (3) of said core ring (2) is fixed by adhesive.

4. Rotary kiln according to Claim 1, wherein the joint of the core ring is protected from tension by seam threads running in the ring circumferential direction, which penetrate the core ring (2) on both sides of the joint (3).

5. Rotary kiln according to Claim 4, wherein said seam threads extend in parallel with each other.

6. Rotary kiln according to Claim 2 or 3, wherein the tension-relieving threads (5) consist of, especially double-threaded, carbon fiber filaments, preferably with a tensile strength of 800-1400 N/m<sup>2</sup> per thread.

7. Rotary kiln according to one of Claims 2 or 3, wherein the tension-relieving threads (5,6) are arranged in a double layer.

8. Rotary kiln according to Claim 7, wherein the tension-relieving threads (6) of the outer (second) layer consist of aramid filaments, preferably with a tensile strength of 2000-2900 N/m<sup>2</sup> per thread.

9. Rotary kiln with at least one annular closed end seal between the revolving tube (16) and at least one stationary end wall (18), wherein one or more of said closed sealing rings consisting of a core ring (2) that has a polygonal, preferably rectangular, cross section having a joint (3) and further consisting of a cover formed as an endless braid (10) surrounding the core ring (2), particularly according to one of Claims 1 or 2, wherein the endless braid (10) has, shape-retaining threads or fibers (8) in the region of the polygon edges extending parallel to the ring circumferential direction.

10. Rotary kiln according to one of Claims 1 or 9, wherein the endless braid (10) is two-layered.

11. Rotary kiln according to one of Claims 1 or 9, wherein the thread or fiber ends of the endless braid (10) are spliced with the braid.

12. Rotary kiln according to one of Claims 1 or 9, wherein the joint surface of the core ring (2) runs at an angle, preferably below 45°, to the rotating tube axis.

13. Rotary kiln according to Claim 2, wherein the core-ring cross section is wound with the tension-relieving threads, especially with carbon fiber filaments (7) at least in the peripheral region of the tension-relieving threads (5,6).

14. Annular, closed seal for the end seal of a rotary kiln (20) between the rotating tube (16) and the stationary end walls (18), consisting of a core ring that has a polygonal, preferably rectangular, cross section with joint and a cover of the core ring formed as an endless braid, wherein the joint (3) of the core ring (2) is fixed with an adhesive and protected from tension by tension-relieving threads or fibers (5,6) extending in the ring circumferential direction and anchored on both sides of the joint.

15. Sealing ring according to Claim 14, comprising one or more of the features anyone of the Claims 4 to 13.

16. Method for producing a sealing ring, consisting of a core ring that has a polygonal cross section with joint and a cover of the core ring formed as an endless braid, comprising the following steps:

a) the joint of the core ring is first fixed with an adhesive and then

b) tension-relieving threads or fibers are tensioned in the ring circumferential direction across the joint and threaded on both sides of the joint with the core ring.

17. Method according to Claim 16, wherein a fiber braid, especially made from longitudinally braided carbon fibers, with a polygonal cross section, is used as the core ring.

18. Method according to Claim 16 or 17, wherein the adhesion of the joint is fixed in position by winding with, in particular a fiber-reinforced, film or adhesive tape.

19. Method according to Claim 16, wherein the sealing ring, and if necessary also the starting material of the core ring, is subjected to a cross-sectional forming step or shaping step, if necessary under simultaneous compression, e.g., by calendaring, after at least one of the production steps.

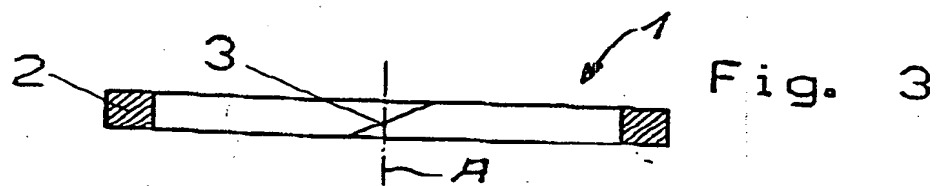
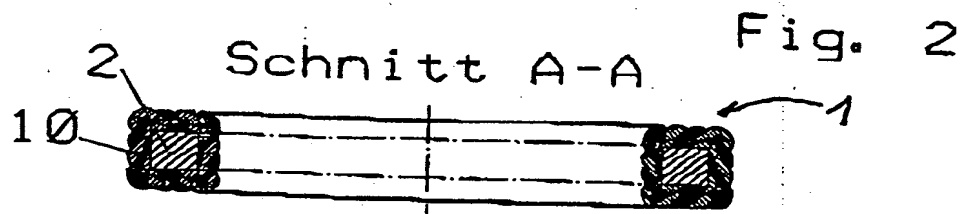
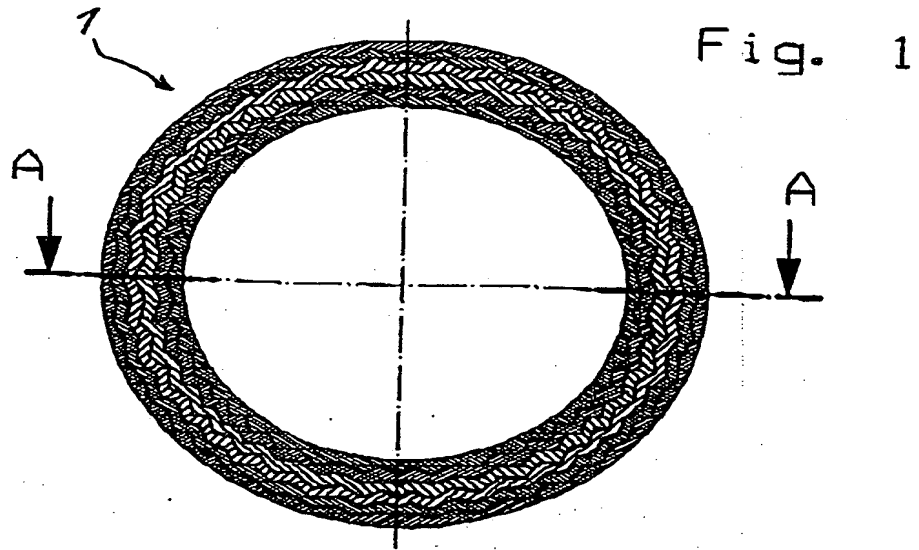
20. Method according to one of Claims 16 or 19, wherein in the endless braid shape-retaining threads or fibers extending in the ring circumferential direction are processed in the region of the polygon edges.

21. Method according to Claim 20, wherein the shape-retaining threads are arranged within the endless braid.

22. Method according to Claim 20 or 21, characterized in that the shape-retaining threads consist of carbon fibers, especially with a strength  $> 1400 \text{ N/m}^2$ .

23. Method according to Claim 20, characterized in that the shape-retaining threads are held under higher tensile stress than the braid threads during braiding.

1/3



2/3

Fig. 4A

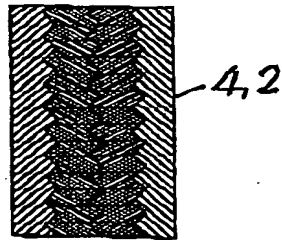


Fig. 6A

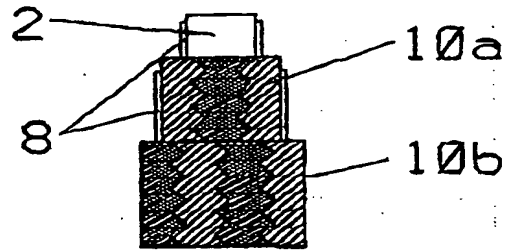


Fig. 4B

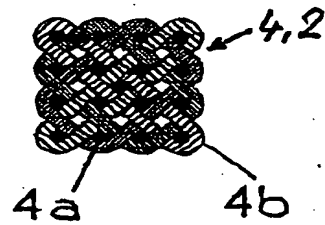


Fig. 6C

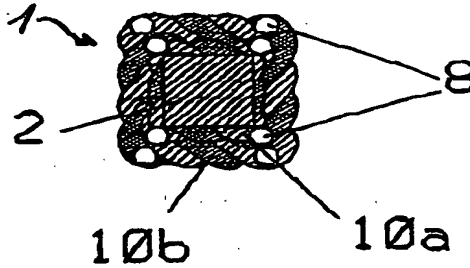


Fig. 6B

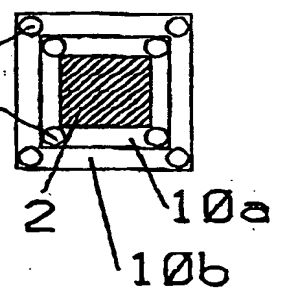


Fig. 5A

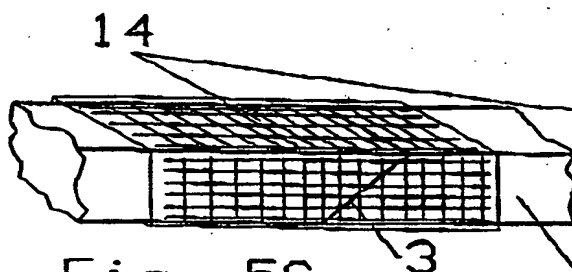


Fig. 5B

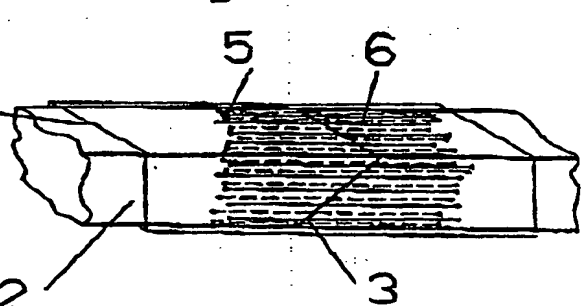
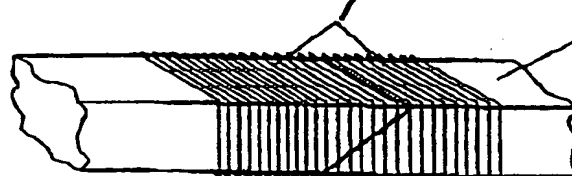


Fig. 5C



3/3

Fig. 7a

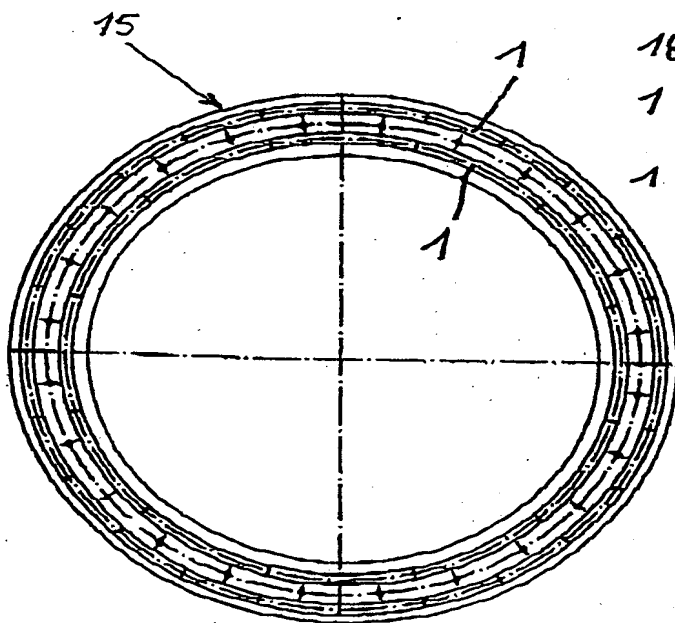
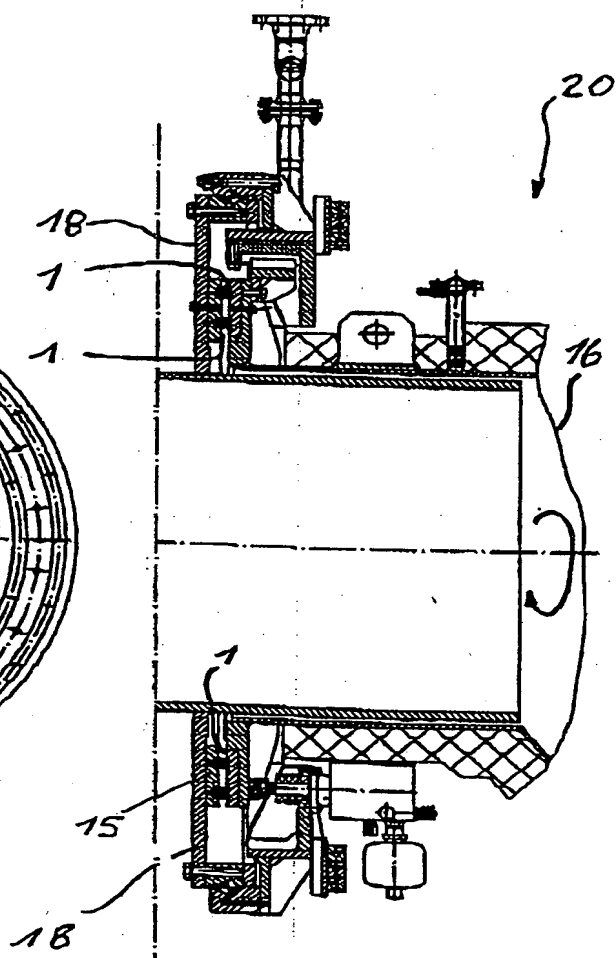
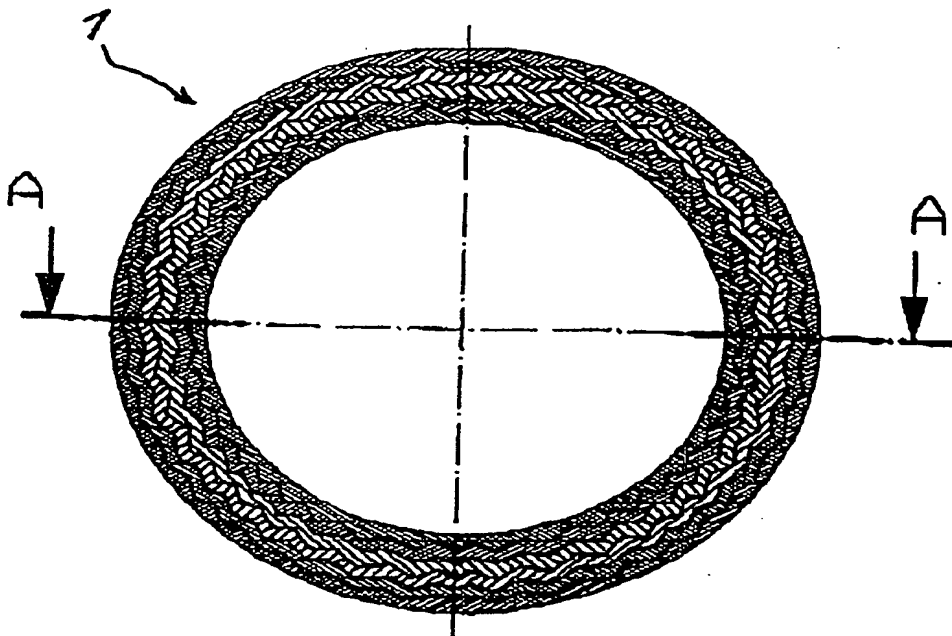


Fig. 7b





**THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)**